

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

«اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا،
وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا،
فِي مَسْجِدِ اللَّهِ فَذُنُوبُهَا أَلْفٌ بِأَلْفٍ تُؤْمَرُ
وَيُرْسَلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى.
إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ» ﴿٤٢﴾
الزمر ٤٢

«Allāh takes the souls at the time of their death, and (also) those that have not died yet — during their sleep. Then He keeps those for which He has decreed death and releases the others for a specified term. Indeed, in this are signs for those who reflect.» ﴿Az-Zumar 39:42﴾

الرَّحْلَةُ الْمَحْتُمَةِ - الْكِتَابُ الْخَامِسُ
THE INEVITABLE JOURNEY - BOOK 5

آدَابُ النَّوْمِ وَتَعْبِيرُ الرُّؤْيَى

THE DREAMER'S HANDBOOK
SLEEP ETIQUETTES & DREAM INTERPRETATION
IN LIGHT OF THE SUNNAH

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُصْطَفَى الْجِبَالِي

MUHAMMAD MUŞTAFĀ AL-JIBĀLĪ

مَنْشُورَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ
AL-KITAAB & AS-SUNNAH PUBLISHING

CHAPTER 1

THE SOUL

The Truth about the Soul

The soul is one of the greatest puzzles for humanity. All people agree that a “living” person becomes “dead” by the departure of “life” or “soul”. The soul is the only part of *ghayb* that even atheists and materialists cannot deny.

Obviously, the soul is responsible for life. But what are its properties, qualities, abilities, etc? Philosophers, theologians, mystics, scientists, and other types of people have tried to answer such questions — only to come up with conflicting and confusing views that have no solid proof or evidence.

In Islām, we are given a few glimpses into the knowledge of the soul. But its detailed understanding remains concealed from us. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ، قُلْ: «الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي،
وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا.» ﴿٨٥﴾ الإسراء

«They ask you (O Muḥammad) concerning the soul. Say, “The soul is of the affair (i.e., knowledge) of my Lord. And you (people) have not been given of knowledge except a little.”»¹

Al-Qurṭubī (رحمته الله) said:

“This means that the knowledge of the soul is a great and major affair that belongs with Allāh (ﷻ). He kept this knowledge obscure and undetailed so that people would realize their inability to know the truth about

¹ Al-Isrā’ 17:85.

their soul — though they know it (i.e., the soul) exists. And being incapable of fully comprehending the truth about themselves is more reason for them to be incapable of fully comprehending the truth about Allāh (i.e., His majesty and other attributes).”¹

From various authentic texts, we learn that the soul is an invisible object that is intertwined with the body. It has many qualities that we normally apply to tangible bodies: It has “eyes” and “hands”; an angel “blows” it into a body to give the body life; an angel “pulls” it out of a body to cause the body death; it “hides” and “clings” to the body to evade the Angel of Death; it “departs” from the body at death; it has either a good or foul “odor”; angels “hold” it, “put” it in shrouds, and “embalm” it; it “speaks” to other souls in the heavens; and so on.²

Although the body dies, the soul does not. Al-Qurtubī (رحمته الله) said, “The soul neither dies nor expires. It is of those created things that have a beginning but no end.”³

In this book, we will learn some additional qualities of the soul.

Two Words for “Soul” in Arabic

In the texts of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, two words are used for soul: “*rūḥ*” (pl. *arwāḥ*) and “*nafs*” (pl. *anfus*)⁴. Some scholars believe that these two words apply to different aspects of the soul. The correct view, however, is that they have the same meaning, because they are used interchangeably when discussing identical situations.

For example, al-Barā’ Bin ‘Āzib (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يَقُولُ مَلِكُ الْمَوْتِ: «أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمَطْمَئِنَّةُ، أَخْرِجِي إِلَى مَغْفَرَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ». فَتَخْرُجُ تَسِيلُ كَمَا تَسِيلُ الْقَطْرَةُ مِنْ فِي السَّقَاءِ. حَتَّى إِذَا خَرَجَتْ رُوحُهُ صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ كُلُّ مَلَكٍ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ...»

1 *Al-Jāmi‘ li-Aḥkām il-Qur’ān* 17:85.

2 We discuss these and other related incidents in our book, “Life in *al-Barzakh*”.

3 *Al-Jāmi‘ li-Aḥkām il-Qur’ān* 39:42.

4 This is similar to that the English words “spirit” and “soul” are synonyms.

«The Angel of Death says (to a dying believer's soul), "O good and peaceful nafs, depart to forgiveness and acceptance from Allāh." On hearing this, it leaves the body as easily as water flowing from the spout of a waterskin, and the Angel of Death takes it.

When his rūh departs, all angels between the heavens and the earth beseech forgiveness for him ...»¹

As another example, Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) visited Abū Salamah after his gaze became fixed (because of death). He closed Abū Salamah's eyes and said:

«إِنَّ الرُّوحَ إِذَا قُبِضَ تَبِعَهُ الْبَصَرُ.»

«Indeed, when the rūh is taken, the eyesight follows it.»²

Reporting the same incident, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَلَمْ تَرَوْا الْإِنْسَانَ إِذَا مَاتَ شَخَصَ بَصَرُهُ؟

فَذَلِكَ حِينَ يَتَّبِعُ بَصَرُهُ نَفْسَهُ.»

«Don't you see that when a person dies his gaze becomes fixed? This happens because his eyesight follows his (departing) nafs.»³

Commenting on this, an-Nawawī (رحمته الله) said:

"This provides evidence for those who say that rūh and nafs have the same meaning."⁴

A third example is that Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and others; verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* pp. 198-202).

2 Recorded by Muslim (920), Aḥmad, and others.

3 Recorded by Muslim (921).

4 *Al-Minhāj* 6:463.

«اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا، وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا» الزمر ٤٢

«Allāh takes the *anfus* at the time of their death, and (also) those that have not died during their sleep.» ¹

Also referring to sleep, Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَبَضَ أَرْوَاحَنَا حِينَ شَاءَ، وَرَدَّهَا إِلَيْنَا حِينَ شَاءَ.»

«Indeed, Allāh took away our *arwāh* (during sleep) when He willed, and returned them to us when He willed.» ²

Sleep Is a Minor Death

During sleep, our souls depart from our bodies in an obscure manner. The soul of every sleeping person is held by Allāh, and He then releases it when it is time to wake up. This is expressed by texts from both the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

TEXTS FROM THE QUR'ĀN

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ، وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ، ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى، ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ، ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ الْأَنْعَامَ ٦٠

«It is He who takes you (i.e., your souls) by night and knows what you do by day. Then He raises you in it (i.e., by day) until a specified term is fulfilled. Then to Him will be your return, and He will inform

¹ Az-Zumar 39:42.

² This happened when the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions stopped to rest during their return from the battle of Khaybar and were so exhausted that they slept through the time of the *fajr* prayer. This was recorded by al-Bukhārī (595), Muslim (680, 681, from Abū Hurayrah and Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه), and others.